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OTHER-WORLD IDYLLS

POEMS AND SONNETS



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OTHER-WORLD IDYLLS

POEMS AND SONNETS

BY

C. E. ROWE



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1905

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TO MY FRIENDS

997306

FOREWORD

A WOMAN's thoughts, that haunt the upper air,
What time she doth her daily tasks fulfil
With careful foresight, moulding to her will
Her little world, that would be meagre, bare
But for the poet-lore enshrined there.

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OTHER-WORLD IDYLLS

THIS AND THE OTHER SIDE

ON THIS SIDE—THE PARTING

“**Y**ES, we must part, dear love,” and gathering
tears

Filled the fond eyes that now must look their last
In this world on each other. Laxer grew
The close, warm hand-clasp, as God's angel, Death,
Came in and took possession. There he lay,
Husband and father, wrapped in silent calm
Of holiest sleeping; for God's finger swept
O'er the still brow, and through the solemn hush
That marks a good man's passing, might be heard
The Master speaking: “Lo! this man was Mine,
And I have called him!” Children stood around,
Awe-struck and weeping; but the mother prayed
For guidance; conscious of the blessing gone,
That kept her life in earthly equipoise.

No lost love could she mourn, though he was not:
He was not dead to her; would nearer live
In spirit-presence, moulding all her will,
As his, to Heaven. The love God gave,
Death could not weaken, time could not destroy.—

Yet she must live for these, that none be lost,
His children. Thus she faced the dark, and saw
God's Hand through all, and laid her own within.

II. THE OTHER SIDE—HIS STORY

Had I been dreaming; or did angels come,
And soft uncloze my eyelids?

Gentle hands

Rolled back the covering films that hid my view,
And opened Heaven, as all my spirit drew
Deep draughts of love from gracious woman's eyes,
And full strong manhood's, in the angel pair
That watched beside me; folding me about
With sweet, celestial calm.—At first, I met
Their look unruffled, as an infant keeps
Its trusting gaze for ever motherwards.—
Alas! some consciousness that lay conceal'd,
Blurr'd the blest vision, and I turned away,
Ev'n as a child, caught in forbidden act,
Turns from its tender mother's saddened smile.

Another pair approaching, welcomed me.
So heavenly bright their raiment, rainbow-lights
Seem'd woven in it, and the lustrous glow
Of thick-set jewels sparkled as they moved.
They spoke in silver accents as one voice,

And all my pulses thrill'd in sweet accord ;
My very breath seemed holden with delight
At their pure utterance. But when my lips
Essay'd their language, lo ! I found it not,
And their sweet speech remained a memory,
As of some far-off, perfect harmony,
Or voice of God among the listening hills ;
Heard, but past answering, dimly understood.—
Again I turned away with shaded eyes,
And felt, not saw them, vanish.

Yet again

Came other heavenly visitants, and bade
Me “welcome” ; called me “brother,” show'd afar
A stately city bathed in golden light.
“Such is the city, and the church we love,
O brother !” spake they, and straightway began
Extolling her fair praise and perfect form,
The Bride, the Lamb's Wife, New Jerusalem.
And I assented gladly. But at last,
Some weariness, I cannot tell the cause,
Of the high theme, o'erpowered me, I turned
From them half-sadly, not unwillingly,
Grasping the promise of their parting words,
“Not yet, O brother ! canst thou join with us,
But thou shalt shortly, as thy life is true.”

They gone, I breathed more freely, look'd around ;
All seem'd familiar, though it was not so.

I felt a new strange vigour fill my limbs,
A fresh life flood my being. Ev'ry sense
Bore new delight, and all my inmost soul
Bent reverent, to thank and praise the Lord.

Had I then died ; and did I live again ?
If so,—the others,—those that went before !
Ev'n with the thought, affection prompting it,
I saw them all again. My mother came,
And kissed me on the forehead. Her I knew,
By subtlest instinct, though her face was changed
To perfect beauty ; and her graceful form
Moved in first flush of lovely womanhood.

Friends gathered round me, eager, questioning :
And some clasp'd hands and parted ; some remained
And spoke their joy to see me.

Suddenly,
The thought of home that ever lies conceal'd,
Unconscious, as the beating of the heart,
And her that makes it, the true heart itself,
Smote me with anguish. " Left behind ! My wife,
My darling ! " 'scaped me unawares, as all
My manhood strove with the swift rush of tears.

" Thy home is ready," said a gentle voice ;
" Her love has reached it even now, and found

Employment in its gracing. Flowers there
Are her affections blossoming for thee.”
I thanked the lovely ministrant, and knew
Her for my darling’s friend, when we were wed.
The friend that shared her mind and inmost heart
Or e’er she turned to me, and gave herself
Love’s priceless gift for Love’s eternity.

Twilight had gathered at sad thoughts of her ;
I followed my sweet guide, and found a house
Green-nested, spacious, musical with birds,
Rose clusters shedding odours. Then her friend,
“ Be comforted, for she will surely come.
The gift, God gave, He will not take away,
Though held back for a moment.” So was gone ;
And I alone the inmate. Food and wine
Stood ready ; once again deep thankfulness
To the All-Father fill’d my grateful soul,
And I partook with praises.

’Twas not night,
But the calm twilight after summer’s day,
Starry and silent. *She* seemed everywhere,
Unseen, yet near me ; impress of her hand,
Touch’d, in the woman’s way, all things with grace.
I felt her presence nearer as I prayed,
And knew her blessing folded me in sleep.—

Morning in heaven! Opened casements drew
Large breaths of fragrance, and celestial airs
Swept o'er my forehead, bidding me awake
And seek the new day's duties. At the call,
I rose and turned me sunwards, to the Lord.
And heard a child's voice singing, "Praise the Lord!"
Heard all about me joyous praises rise
Like skylarks on the wing. But the child's song
Drew me towards her, as to one I knew.

She stood among the lilies' scented snow,
A child, but yet a maiden: her sweet face,
Upturned to meet me with a sunny smile,
Grew sudden child-like, as I bent to kiss
The little blossom gathered from our side,
In its first spring-time. Then her mother's face
Flashed on me with new gladness, as aware
Of this our meeting, and as blessing it.
So past I onwards; stepping swiftly down
From her pure heights of heavenly innocence;
And found my place, and work, and utmost use,
But freer, fuller, in the larger life.
And good friends with me, all of one accord,
The love of our Lord's kingdom, and His praise.

But with the morning joy of each new day,
Among the roses and fair lily-blooms,
Slender and graceful as a silver birch,

Our daughter comes to greet me ; maiden grown,
But like her mother, with her mother's voice.
And as we turn to the great Lord of all,
And take the present trusting from His hand,
I know my darling's soul is near to mine,
Love guarded and love guided ; she will come.

.

III. ON THIS SIDE—HER DREAM

“Grey hairs, my dear ? Ah ! well, the grey must come.
I had the rose-bloom ere your father died,
And now the grey is welcome. Do not weep,
Because I go to meet him. You I leave,
Blest in the self-same happiness as mine,
A God-made marriage. For God gives them so,
That earth may see what Heaven is, and strive
For like inheritance.—But when he died,
I loved to think of him with our sweet babe,
That went home first, I know, to greet him there ;
For he would miss me sorely, that I know.
And I have often dreamed how we should meet ;
And spent spare time in fond imaginings ;
Most strongly when I saw two human hearts
Sunned in the same bright beam that fills my own.—

“ But one sweet fancy dwells within my brain ;
And I will tell it ;—sit you down awhile,

And hear my dreaming. He will be alone ;
But in a garden where rich roses bloom,
And all the air is fragrance. Singing birds
Will pipe melodious, and angelic songs
Sweet with heart-music, fill the list'ning ear.
All clothed in purple, as a bridegroom is,
He stands, and waits my coming. And I see
High overhead, the Sun, that faces him,
And draws me to him ; straight before my eyes
And his ; the Source of all our love and life.

“ I feel me wrapped in a soft luminous veil,
That hides me from him ; but my fond desire
Goes forth from it, and I can see his face
Bespeaking wonder, as the guiding Sun
Impels me nearer. Slighter grows the veil
That hides me from him, slips away at last,
And we stand face to face. No need to speak,
Our swift eyes drink the other's vivid life,
And lips long-parted meet all-silently.

“ Then, the first rapture over ; lo ! our child
Beside us :—and thus ends my dream. I think
That I could sleep a little.” So she slept.

AN OTHER-WORLD IDYLL

I

A LITTLE gutter child at play,
Moulded strange forms in mud and clay.

A sculptor's genius slept amid
The city's deepest squalor hid.

A pale girl-playmate at his side,
Grew paler daily, sickened, died.

He, as he wrought within the street,
Was trampled by the horses' feet ;

Beneath the waggon-wheels his life
Passed out of reach of earthly strife.

.
Then God's bright angels took the twain,
They lived and played in heaven again.

They breathed delight in childish wise
With myriad babes in Paradise.

And learned from lips of maidens fair,
The knowledge of their Father there.

.
But as they both in stature grew,
Each faded from the other's view.

For wise man-angels held the boy,
Instructed him in heaven's employ ;

From out his nature drew the ore
God hid within it long before.

And to his eager searching eyes
Unfolded heavenly mysteries.

Taught him to cleanse the spots of shame
That from ancestral evil came.

In wisdom's sports to win the race,
Till soul and limbs gained supple grace.

But ever for each wondrous thought,
A fitting form his fancy sought ;

And in his chamber, still, alone,
Shaped it in metal or in stone.

For friendship's gift his art would bring
Or gratitude's glad offering.

And heart and lips would constant raise
To God the Lord adoring praise.

.
In a fair home the little maid
With other maidens lived and played.

Under a wedded angel's care,
She deftly broidered garments there.

And, shrined within her chamber sweet,
Read from the Word with reverence meet.

A garden all her own she knew,
Wherein sweet-scented flowers she grew ;

And gathered from their changeful dyes
Her budding soul's necessities.

If ere she harboured thought unfit,
A fading blossom shadowed it ;

But all her loving duties done,
New blooms within the borders shone ;

Then with the happy maiden-throng
She praised the Lord in grateful song.

II

Morning in heaven. Had he dreamed ?
What need within his spirit seemed ;

A something undefined and dim,
A strange unrest disturbing him ;

That led him forth the flower-fringed ways
Where angel-maids sang morning praise.

But as his footsteps nearer drew,
His soul's perception swifter flew ;

And from amongst them, unafraid,
His heart's deep longing sought the maid.

He, keen for truth, and apt to good,
Had grown to perfect angelhood.

She, beauty's self, soft-breathing, warm,
His fairest dream, love's living form.

Eastward their faces both were turned
As young affection in them burned.

And as they each together drew,
The Lord's own guiding Hand they knew.

To each their mutual love confessed,
To Him their mutual praise addressed :

“Thou Heavenly Bridegroom, Lord Divine,
Do Thou our hearts and lives enshrine !”

When lo ! all objects round them bloomed,
With a new radiance, joy-illumed :

A wealth of roses filled the air,
Enfolding them in fragrance rare ;

And wedded angels clasped their hands,
Taught them true marriage-love's demands,

That wisdom's lore, and love's increase
Flowed from its purity and peace.

III

Day dawn in heaven ! Sweet as spring,
Of marriage-love the virgins sing.

And straightway wedding guests repair
To a new mansion, stately, fair ;

With pillared porches, where entwine
Rich sculptured scrolls of rose and vine ;

Gift of the Lord this morning-tide,
Home of the bridegroom and the bride.

About the porch young children played,
In zones and wreaths of flowers arrayed ;

Each tender girl, each strong-limbed boy,
Instinct with innocence and joy.

And as the angels thither came,
Their garments glowed with roseate flame.

Their jewels flashed more clearly bright,
The outbirth of their pure delight.

See ! now within the new-made home,
The happy bride and bridegroom come ;

He, robed in purple ; she, serene,
Clad in the raiment of a queen.

Types of the Lamb's high marriage, they
Who love and truth as one, obey.

Six beauteous virgins on them wait,
Rejoicing in their glad estate.

Lo ! when the bridal rite was done,
A glory in the chamber shone ;

The blessing sought by inmost love,
Breathed heavenly odours from above ;

For each to each the Lord hath given,
Sole Source of marriage-love in heaven.

All children, by His mercy, there
Complete their lives in order fair ;

Snatched from our cities' fateful gloom,
As blossoms in His garden bloom ;

And to angelic stature grown,
Are wedded by the Lord alone.

"A male and female" made He them
On earth—His outmost garment's hem.

And male and female do they rise,
For perfect union, heavenly-wise.

UNTO THIS END

I. A LIFE'S TRAGEDY

SHE, for her fortune wedded, not herself,
Deceived by looks of counterfeited love,
And simulated faith in holy things,
Went trembling to the altar ; all her soul
One steadfast prayer to be true wife to him.—

Nor long the semblance lasted ; ere her child
With baby lips had syllabled her name,
A slow but sure unveiling, left the fact
Too plainly clear, and love lay slain within.
Henceforth house-mistress only, and not wife,
Her duty lay before her, not her joy ;—
The stab of disappointment struck so deep,
That but for motherhood her heart had died ;
On that it took new root, and sprang toward heaven,
Fed by a babe's unconscious ministry.

And day by day his sin against her grew,
With added wrong on wrong. But the young life,
A common bond between them, held the twain
From final parting, soul-asundered far.

A sickly child, that needed utmost care ;
Puny and fretful, with a constant wail,
Her tendance often failed to satisfy.—
To whom the father, with quaint word and jest,
Brought daily sunshine, bred of gaiety,
Fine health, and easy selfishness.

Who tend the children should be joyous, bright,
Nor let life's darkening shades too early fall ;
This she learned later ; but, at first, the pain
Of her sick heart so weighed her spirit down
She scarce could smile for very heaviness.—
A helpful sentence stirred her soul to life ;
Heard in a crowded London drawing-room ;
One earnest speaker 'mid the foolish hum
And light lip-laughter of gay fashion-flies.
“Strive for heart-sunshine ; God meant light and peace
For His creation ; do not hug a grief,
Nor weight the deepest sorrow selfishly ;
Give love, not seek it.”—

Thus she took a hand
That stretched out to her all-unknowingly ;
And grasped it with assurance of its strength ;
Nor heard the voice again, but kept the thought ;
So faced her life, and put the dead past by,
Lived in “the Now,” and let the future be ;
With daily patience meeting daily cares,
Made pastime for her weakling and herself,

And won him to a half forgetfulness.
Yet, if in times of loneliness, she sighed,
To feel her life, so widowed, slip away,
She checked it with the thought of Providence,
That knowing all things, held her in its hand.

II. THE DOCTOR WRITES

You thought the baby face enshrined a soul ;
And I, who watched her narrowly, when wed,
Prayed you might waken into active life
The sleeping better nature. Not to be,
O true, strong friend ; my friend of college days !

A doctor's life but little leisure knows ;—
Your marriage-morning brought a respite brief,
And then, we met not often. Happier, I
Had found true mate, best gift of God to man ;
And loved her with a love that ever grew
Through each day's good or ill, as high Love willed.
But she, a broken lily, spent with pain ;—
An accident ;—you heard ?—had wrought the ill ;
Claimed closest care, all other duties done.—
Still, rumour, many-tongued, and foul of mouth,
Spoke of the foolish flirt who bore your name
Yet scorned you all allegiance. Then I heard
The shameful flight that freed you from the thrall ;
And then the offer from the East to you,

Gladly accepted, nobly justified.

I blame you not, old friend, you kept away ;
And bore your griefs in rigorous solitude,
Though friendship has its dues as well as love.
We English have an iron reticence,
That keeps strong feeling down, nor lets the world
See much beyond the surface of our lives ;
Which yet we live more strongly for the depths
Hidden from all but love's keen, searching eyes.

And she I loved, grew weaker daily, died ;—
And left the earth the poorer for her smile ;
Me, empty arms, and ever aching heart.—
Although, I know that in the spirit-world
She lives and waits for me, my bride and wife.—
And that,—not long ago ;—but you and I,
Nearing the Great Hereafter, can look back
With calm reflection measuring the past,
Nor see the way unequal, wholly bad.—

And now, I write to ask your friendship's aid :—
There is a lady here I would befriend ;
My Lady loved her with a sister's love ;
And I, for ministrations at her side
Owe her a debt more deep than gratitude.
Here, in this marriage mart of Babylon,
She and her dowry passed to wasteful hands
Her boy was sickly, and she sent for me,

And bit by bit I learned the aching heart
That lay beneath her patient readiness ;
So brought her to my wife for comforting.
The man who called her his, was struck at last ;
Excess had claimed its victim, and he lay,
A prey to sudden horrors ; body racked,
And soul, distressful, beating at the bars
That shut it from its eager lust of life.
A woeful time for her who kept her post,
Till death closed his account, and left her free.
Free, but with broken health, and narrowed means ;
Yet still her child to feed her heart upon.

Then came my Lady's trouble ; then the child
Passed gently from the darkness of this world
To sunshine in the other ; and she came
To be my Lady's nurse and dearest friend.

I hear you ask for nurses ; here is one,
Left lonely in the wasteness of the world :—
Here, rumour falsely links her name with mine,
As she nor I would have it ; did she know,
'Twould pain her deeply ;—her, I send to you ;
Both stricken sorely, working for one end,
The healing of the ills of humankind.
So surely from your sorrows there must come
Some shaping education of the heart,
Not otherwise attained, as God sees best,

Some gain from out life's losses for an end
And full fruition in the world to be.

III. THE DOCTOR SOLILOQUISES

Drowned in mid ocean !—meeting at death's gate !—
He, in the attempt to save her, all unknown,
Ev'n as he took her from the captain's hands,
Gulfed in the seething deep !—The captain saved,
Left me but now, their praises on his lips.
Hers, for her quiet strength when danger came,
And the swift-sinking ship meant death indeed ;
His, from the hearsay of the rescuers.—
Strange ! so to meet,—so meeting, pass away !
Fate, some would call it ;—I say, Providence.
Strange that these two, surviving utter wreck
Of that the heart builds best on ;—fit to be
A helpmate to each other—so she said,—
My dear one, with her tender woman's heart,
Longing to compass happiness for all ;—
And strange her thought so seconded by mine
Should be so soon frustrated !—Who can tell ?
It may be in that world that near us lies,
In which our souls live all-unconsciously,
They two have walked together, one in use ;
From their great sorrow wringing surer trust
In the God-Man whose sorrow shook the world.—

For happiness oft breeds a selfish joy
That centres in the dear ones of the hearth,
And hugs itself in them to slothful ease,
Unmindful of the toil and stress without.—
And much that we blind mortals take for love
Is like the grub that eats destructive way
Among the toothsome herbage, leaving wreck
And ordure in its path ; but truest love,
Love winged for freest heaven, Psyche-born,
Feeds on the purest juices, harming nought,
And leaves the blossom fertilized for seed.

Yes, she will meet them, surely meet them there,
Will ask of me, and then my face will grow
A little nearer hers as they will speak ;
And my soul's strength will draw her beauty down
For comfort in my earthly loneliness.
All in a flash I see her, girt with light,
And babes of Eden plucking at her gown ;
Who bore no babe on earth, but held the love
Of children dearly as all women should.
O love ! my love ! the love God gave to me
For perfecting my being and thy own,
My lips grew reverent beneath thy kiss,
Thy patience taught me how to wait His will.

IV. AS IN A DREAM

One said, "Your wife is come;"—and straight he went
To seek her ; though he loved her not, he deemed
Her yet his chattel, still in bonds to him.
And as he went, the way familiar grew,
His past life gathered round him, and he saw
The well-known street, the stately house appear,
And on the threshold standing, her, once more.
Her, as he knew her ; and yet not the same.
About her seemed a force invisible,
That barred her from him ; though he forced his way
With utmost strength to reach and claim her his.
And as he stood, his heart's hot anger burned,
And the long-smouldering hatred broke to flame,
He would have slain her.—

For the wife so held,
Stands on the threshold merely, enters not
The inner marriage-chamber of the soul
Where the life's love abides ; but hated, spurned,
Passes uninjured, virgin to the core.

She held a tiny scroll within her hand,
That glowed with living light ; for lo ! thereon,
" In Thee, O Lord, I put my trust," was writ ;—
Her soul's trust and her safeguard.

Mad with rage
He rushed upon her, but a sudden power,

Born of the Word, hurled him apart, as dead.—
She saw him not; but a swart leopard leaped
Beyond her into darkness, gone as soon;
Ere she was 'ware of horror of its spring.

As in a dream she trod a flowery way,
Seeking her boy, as oft in dreams ere now.
Her heart uplifted sang a joyous strain;

“ O Lord of life, Who guidest me,
Keep me within Thy narrow way;
O Lord, thy hand providest me
With varied blessings, day by day.
O Lord, Thy Word upholdest me,
Thyself its soul, its healing power;
O Lord, Thy love enfoldest me
With thy redemption's priceless dower.”

So passed she on, and entered a fair grove
Where scented lime-trees cast a cooling shade;
Long avenues, o'er-arched cathedral-wise,
Led to a noble building girdled round
With softest sward, a ring of emerald.
Thither gay shoutings drew her; for she heard
Glad acclamations hail a victor there.

It was a stately Academe, where youths
Were trained in knowledges that fit for Heaven.
And all about the woods they roamed at will,

Or sought for eminence in manly sports,
Of wrestling, running, leaping and the like ;
Angelic spirits guarding them in all ;
Rejoicing in the pastimes of their charge ;
Fost'ring the budding manhood with the care
That fits the body for the throne of mind.—

Like a young hero, supple-sinewed, strong,
Stood, in the centre, one, with laurel crowned,
And fair blue eyes that searching, sought her own
With somewhat of remembrance :—as it grew
Pressing aside his votaries, he came
And knelt before her, clasping both her hands ;
Her son, though hers no more.—One Father there
Folds all His children in a Father's love ;
And motherhood is cherished by the care
Of little children breathed upon by death,
Re-born to life immortal in the skies.

V. UNTO THIS END.

Onward the strong man went, nor felt a fear,
Though all around was strange and wonderful:
“ In Thee, O Lord, I trust,” his watchward still.—
And old-world friends came round him, greeting him,
And drew him to a city on a hill,
There made him welcome as full citizen.
And there he found his use ; and there went through

The slow purgation driving all of ill
From centre to the utmost bound of life ;
Fitting the soul for heaven's more perfect air.
And there his life found leisure ; loosed itself
From old-world bonds : and waking, knew the need,
Kept down most silently, yet need most strong,
Of that companionship God meant for him.

The morning air breathed fragrance, rose-distilled ;
And song-birds' flutings, silverly and clear,
Floated upon it through his casements wide,
That fronting eastward, ever welcomed dawn.
Rising, with blest "Our Father," on his lips ;
Trusting in Him, knowing the Master knew ;
He left the city's boundaries and found
A pathway through the young wheat's dewy green.
A joyous spring-tide promise filled the air,
And youth's warm pulses stirred his heart again ;
Above him bent the heaven's o'er-arching blue,
Flooded with light ; the light of that bright day,
Refulgent with the glory of the Lord.

He came upon a garden pranked with flowers ;
Breathing child-music and soft baby coos
Of low-voiced, sweet content ; and centred there,
Amid the innocents, two women stood ;
And one was wife,—who waited,—one unwed ;—
And both were young, and both were beautiful.

Then she, the wife, with wedded girdle bound,
Gave him full courteous greeting as the friend,
Trusted and tried, of him her heart held dear ;
And laid that other's hand within his own.
She, with her soft grey eyes, half questioning,
Saw, on a sudden, pass a vision swift,
Of heated rooms, and pressure of the throng ;
And his voice speaking ; " Seek not love, but give."
And knew the brave strong manhood fronting her
For her past helper, and her soul's ideal.—

He had his memories also ; cries of fear,
Shipwreck, the swirling waters, and her face
Starring the darkness till it passed to light,
The light of the soul's beauty, glorified,
And flushed before him, woman-sweet, as now.

And she, the wife, joyed with them in their joy,
Nor hid a selfish thought within her breast ;
The children felt the sphere of souls that meet
For glad betrothal ; and the conscious flowers
Flashed light as gems, and still more odorous grew.

RESPONSIBILITY

“**D**EAD!” whispered softly. Ere he fell asleep
He heard it, and half smiled to think how
well

He would evade their greed, and grasp his gold
As he had done till now, to work his will.
How long he slept, he knew not ; gentle dreams
Of hovering angels, so he seemed aware,
Closed round him ; then, as consciousness returned,
A shuddering horror and a headlong flight,
He knew not whither, nor the reason why.

“ Now to awake and foil them ! ”—his first thought.
Arousing then, as one who, fighting death,
Has conquered, but as yet is half subdued ;
His languorous eyes slow-opening sought in vain
His late environment. Where stood the heir,
Hated because of heirship ; heir, not son ;
Alien in every way, but heir by law—
Faugh ! how he hated him ; had willed away
Each shred but that he could not—surely hate
Should see him ; but he saw him not. His wife,
Fingering her kerchief daintily, gone too !
In such a hurry for her widow’s weeds !

Then with new-added impulse, wonder-born,
He raised himself and took a strange world in.
For bed, rank mud; for silken coverings,
Webs, and cold drippings of the ceaseless rain.
Grey rats, and crawling creatures of the slime,
The sole companions of his naked shame.
What! was he mad? No! all the fever gone—
Cool brow, cool hands, and every sense alive!
There was a doorway open; forth he leaped,
And glared with eager eyes on a vast waste,
Of which he was the sole inhabitant.
The hut, just left, had vanished, and he stood
Alone amid the moor. On, on he ran,
And still the landscape changed not; stretched
away
All bleak and barren as Siberian plains.

And now gaunt hunger seized him, nipt him hard;
Not the keen relish that he once had known,
But the fierce flame that burns the poor, till death,
In its great mercy, quiets every pang.
He stooped to search among the stones for fruits,
If haply there might be some. Fruits there were,
Such as he had not dreamed of. Every stone
Grew human 'neath his hand, and memory
Brought all his evil past within his view.
There lay dead college comrades, wildest set,
That sow such crops as make the world a hell;

There mess-room mates ; there wanton women smiled,
Whose fatal beauty fills the world with woe.

And here one face a pallid sweetness wore—
His girl-wife ; prized that he had stolen her
From one she loved ; she, by her father sold
For coroneted splendours and sick heart,
Died, with her baby, of disgust of him,
And longing for the love denied to her.
The bishop who had wed them stained his soul
Breathing a blessing on the rite profaned :
Such timorous shepherds where high rank's concerned !

And here his own son's mother. Nameless son !
A son to grace his title ; disallowed
By fault of birth ; or sin of graceless sire !
There was he worsted. All his land to pass
Out of his line ; while he, his only son,
Stood far aloof, and scorned his fatherhood.
“ My rights you cannot give me, nought beside
I take from you : ” so proudly held his way,
Chose honest toil and left unworthy ease,
A living protest to his father's sin,
Much damning could not utterly efface.

Then swept a wind across the wintry waste,
And in the wind a voice that seemed to cry,
“ Lo ! this thy world ; behold thyself enthroned,

Thyself the god, thyself sole worshipper,
And here thy victims!" Then a ghostly train
Passed by him, breathing on him icy breath
That chilled his naked frame to very bone.
No careless comrades here, though even here,
Like a foul stream his vices filtered down
In imitated grimness. Greed in him
Begot the silent thief that by his side
Looked almost honest, pilfering for bread.

Unbridled license and unholy love,
Condoned in him, grew rampant in the land.
The miserable throngs that haunt the streets
Passed him in wild confusion, brazen-browed,
Himself storm-centre of their seething waves.
Now born of wealth heaped-up or misapplied,
In countless myriads, poverty crept by ;
Gaunt, hollow-eyed, degraded to the depths.
Men lost to manhood, lowered to the beast,
The unregarded refuse of the world,
Should be its bone and sinew rightly spent.
Wan, milkless mothers holding puny babes,
Dead-sick themselves of hunger. Children trooped—
The life and laughter of a healthy land—
Here, one great sob the nation faintly heard.
But as these passed in piteous innocence
An added horror seized him, lep'rous sores,
Worse than the cold or hunger, took his flesh

And made it one corruption : their pure sphere
 Revealed his foulness. Once again the voice
 Cried down the waste, " Behold thyself, the god,
 This thy dominion, throned amid thy work ! "

There as he stood, he felt the great To Be
 Press on him in its might, and crush him down.
 Never to cease from being what he was ;
 Never to see a happy creature more ;
 But live with all these phantoms mocking him.
 Cold, hunger, foulness paled before that fear,
 And jibbering madness stared him in the face :
 He closed his eyes ; the moanings filled his ears ;
 He plunged his fingers in them ; blindly ran,
 And overcome with horror, swooned again.

* * * * *

" Wild " ? I should think he was wild ! ' The mad earl,'
 They used to call him, ere that illness came.
 Never was such a change ! My lady, too—
 One of the fast ones, seemed to have no soul—
 Moved by effect in him, changed utterly.
 They say he had a dream, and seemed to see
 The past a ghostly present full of woe ;
 Gasping came back to life with one idea,
 How to undo the evil he had done.

* * * * *

His heir was noble, helped him to the right
 With kindly interest, and no thought of self ;

Once hated, then true-valued as a friend ;
' His good Samaritan ' he calls him now.
He taught repentance : not the whining cry
That weeps and whimpers, impotent of good ;
But the true grief that ceaseless stirs itself
To higher action and to nobler work—
' Help man, help God, and God will help you, too '—
So slowly made the dead man live again ;
First cleansed his house of wild extravagance,
Of lawless servants, fattening on misrule ;
Did justice to the farmer for his toil,
Made habitable homesteads for his men,
And cheered them for the bettering of the land,
Nor taxed them by the raising of the rent.

Next took the city's vortex ; sought the waifs
His vision showed him, dying on his land ;
And on their stunted, miserable lives
Let in the sunshine of a better day.
So climbed up painfully the steep incline,
Working for order and true charity ;
Not the cheap toy that gives a hundred here,
Or fifty there, while all the press applauds,
' His grace the noble duke of this or that
Out of his millions gives ' a few poor pounds
To help his fellow-mortals stem the flood
His gathered riches keep in constant flow ;

So earns his title as a liberal lord
Scarce mindful of aught missing from his purse.

Not such the heir's true teaching to the earl,
'Work is the peer's and peasant's privilege;
The work of each for each, and each for all,
Fills all the nation's veins with healthful blood,
And builds it up, and moulds it into man.'

And so the earl went forth and faced his work
Like an old warrior armed to conquer wrong.
There toiling for the poorest, met his son,
And grasped his hand, and knew himself forgiven."

LIFE'S CROWN AND LOSS

LOVE IS BEST

LOVE, from Eden wandering,
Evermore doth softly sing;
Sings the sweetest in the Spring;
"Love, true love, is best."

Mammon turns with closèd hands,
He nor cares, nor understands;
He would win, not hearts, but lands;
"Gold, red gold," his best.

Passion rouses, in his eyes
Burns the light of fierce surprise;
"All too tame for me," he cries;
"Lawlessness is best."

Nature thrills in sweet accord,
Knows the accents of her Lord;
Echoes joyfully His word,
"Love, true love, is best."

Little children, smiling, hear;
Written on their foreheads clear,
Purest melodies appear;
"Love, sweet love, is best."

Each true man or woman grown,
Wedded, childless, or alone,
In most secret heart will own,
 “ Love, dear love, is best.”

Age, adown the vale of years,
As the heavenly prospect nears,
Smiles, through mist of quiet tears,
 “ Love, true love, is best.”

Love, from Eden, wandering,
Evermore doth softly sing ;
Sings the sweetest in the Spring ;
 “ Love, true love, is best.”

MARRIAGE LOVE

OUR love had its beginning
In far sweet summer days,
When hand in hand together
We roamed the daisied ways.

Our bridal troth we plighted
'Neath hawthorn's fragrant snow ;
Our lips and heart united,
Ah ! love, so long ago.

Sweet babes brought us their blessing,
Fair children crowned our love ;
But, one by one, they left us
For angelhood above.

Throughout all joy or sorrow
Love held us for its own ;
Now thou art gone before me,
And I am all alone.

But love is born in heaven,
From the dear Lord descends !
A stream for ever flowing,
A song that never ends.

O stream of holy beauty !
O song within my breast !
Come, bear me to my dear one,
To haven of Love's rest.

BIRD SONGS

“ **W**HERE is your home? little bird! little bird!”

Fair springtime, high noontide:

The leaves faintly stirred

By the whispering wind

Breathing soft where I lay,

Full-hearted and happy,

Love-crowned on that day:

“ Ah me! little bird! little bird!”

There's a nest in the willow

That bends o'er the stream,

Where forget-me-nots blossom,

And young lovers dream.

All is warm to the touch,

All is fair to the sight:

“ I live in God's Light,” sang the bird.

“ How do you live? little bird! little bird!”

Mid-winter, grey twilight,

The road-side snow-furred,

And my heart is as chill

As the landscape is dree ;
When the sweet summer waned
My love faded from me :
“ Ah me ! little bird ! little bird ! ”

The nest is deserted,
The willow is bare,
The streamlet is frozen,
No lovers dream there ;
Desolation and sadness
Brood over the land :
“ I live in God’s Hand,” sang the bird.

FRAGMENTS

BROKEN! Thrown back with its wealth and
its burden of love!

Uprooted, and trailing its blossoms low in the
dust.

Broken! and life has henceforward nothing for me!

Burden? Ay, love has its burden as well as its joy—
The burden of striving for higher and better to match
With the new-given glory in life. The burden of strife
With all lower feelings and thoughts, that break foul
in sight

When love's sunshine illumines the soul!

Endure? My love was loyal, God-given and true;
His strength lay in it—a spark of His fire;
Nought earthly can quench it, nor He take away
The good that He gave. Though its object grow less
The love shall grow higher and higher; and burn on
for aye

Till it break into flame in His Presence.

Alone? In this great city-world
Few flowers can flourish, life's roses will fade;

But high overhead is God's blue, unvarying still.
Though earth-clouds may dim it, storm-shadows
 enwrap,
It shines there, and for all. So the love that is broken
 for one
May grow to the sunshine of many, God willing; and
 burn,
Though feeble, His light in the darkness. Burn, not
 broken, but bent,
Bent to His purpose, submitting itself to His will.

His will? Is it so? Does He give and then crush?
I cannot see far. The streets are so narrow, the
 houses so high;
Some windows are laden with flowers; but mostly
 they darken and chill,
And are voiceless of sunshine within. But I look
To the far strip of blue; I can find His hand there,
And, it may be, some day, I shall know Him beside
 me to bless!

WAITING

O LOVE who somewhere waits for me,
At inmost heart unsatisfied ;
Though here the world's dark ways divide,
Yet there will love enlighten thee ;

And thou with clearer eyes wilt see
And know me for thy soul's true bride ;
The love that fleeting time denied
Was destined for eternity.

But here we labour undismayed,
The parted ways will meet above ;
God holds life's threads and unafraid
We wait His crowning of our Love.

FULFILMENT

WERE we in Heaven, you then would surely
know

What my eyes whisper to the patient stars,
When open wide my soul's close casement bars,
And prisoned love, set free, doth wingèd go.

Were we in Heaven.

For there hearts speak, and inmost soul to soul
Full-summed responds, love-lit by Torch Divine
Of highest splendour; there I know you mine,
And God of twain shall mould a perfect whole
In His dear Heaven.

FIFTY YEARS

THIS little golden ring,
What changes will it bring?
So small, so frail a thing,
Like leaves in early spring,
Our young Love's guerdoning.

This little golden ring,
What changes doth it bring?
Among the leaves a nest,
Full hearts by Love caressed,
Full hands to work addressed.

This little golden ring,
What changes hath it wrought?
What blooms of life and thought,
Fair fruitage crowns the days,
Sweet anthems in Love's praise.

Ah! little golden ring!
The crisp and frosty snows
Lie softly on our brows,
But heart to heart we stand,
Ripe for Love's Fatherland.

THE GOLDEN WEDDING

W. H. H. AND E. H.

LET us look back, dear heart, your hand in mine,
Down the long pathway of the vanished years,
So swiftly passed ; our life-time now appears
Love-threaded by God's Providence Divine.

He gave us to each other, He alone,
Our love and all its blessedness, that so,
Through busy years, He leading, we might grow
Into His image, heart and soul, as one.

Thus guarded, love-encircled, all our ways,
Love-guided through our burdens and our cares ;
He stooping to us in our hopes and prayers,
Let us look up, dear heart, and give Him praise.

WIDOWED

I

A T morn and eve my soul lies bare,
Revealed in one absorbing prayer
For thee, dear love, for thee.
God knows the cry, He sees the need,
He pities when I wildly plead
For thee, dear love, for thee.

But can He answer, "Yes" or "No,"
To human weakness, human woe,
Or bring me, love, to thee?
Yet this I feel, on this I rest,
He guardeth all, He worketh best
For thee, dear love, and me.

WIDOWED

II

God holds Love's thread, it seems to break
 When dear ones pass from earth to heaven ;
He holds it fast, He cannot take
 The joy away that He has given.
God holds Love's thread, who He makes one,
 Nor time nor death can disunite ;
Though for a time they dwell alone,
 They are one Angel in His sight.

LONGING

LOVE! art thou calling; dost thou long for me,
As I for thee throughout the empty years?
Ah! thou art living in eternity
And dost not see my tears.

Dost thou not need me; doth thy Lord fill up
The full sweet measure of the joys divine?
Is there no lack; nought wanting in thy cup,
No sorrow;—only mine?

I would not grieve thee, dear! I love thee so;
I would not have thee suffer aught of pain.
My heart cries for thee, yet I surely know
Our souls will meet again.

ON THE THRESHOLD

HOLD the gates open ; let me see within
My dear one standing in the golden light;
Tell him, " I miss him so, that all is night
About me ere I to his presence win
Who made my life so worthwhile."

Ah ! I sin
Against the God who gave him ; in His sight
We still are one, unparted, though delight
Of sight and touch no more make us akin.

Oh ! best belovèd ! soul of all my life ;
I, groping, grow towards thee through the dark
Of all its sorrows ; and if thou dost mark,
As I believe thou dost, with wiser ken
And clearer insight, droop towards me then,
Enfold me with strong loving, call me " Wife ! "

UNDERLYING LIFE

A MONG dead leaves so long my Love has lain,
All over-buried by my fond regrets,
I must away with all the weary pain
That too much brooding unaware begets;
Dead leaves will fall as autumn woodlands wane
Beneath them God has hidden violets.

POEMS

ONLY A WOMAN'S WORK

“FELL asleep at my loom !” did you say ? Ah !
 well, may be I was fain,
So hot, and the work so weary, and my head so dull
 with pain,
The piece seemed to dance before me, as the shuttles
 shot to and fro,
Till I fancied the work was living, and could see the
 roses grow.

You mind the piece ? white satin ; red roses, and leaves
 of green,
Raised velvet ; and dropped so careless down on the
 silvery sheen.
I've wondered if she who wore it, would be fair and
 good within,
And with all things of life so lovely, have ever a cause
 for sin.

And then,—I must have been dreaming, for what do
 you think I should see,
But a bright and holy angel that stood and smiled by
 me ?

So blue her eyes, as the heavens ; so bright her golden
hair ;

Her smiling lips just parted, as if kisses lingered
there.

And then in a moment I knew her, it was Joan, my
Joan, my dear,

My own little baby daughter, that died ere she'd lived
a year ;

And as soon as my spirit knew her, I saw that she
wore my gown,

The soft satin folds fell round her, with the roses
blossoming down.

But the satin was shot with sunshine, and the rose-
scents filled the air,

I knew it was my work somehow ; my work, but ten
times more fair.

She spoke, and I knew in a moment, all the love she
had to tell ;

As if I'd been long in Heaven, and knew the language
well.

For angels don't talk to you fine, they speak in a
tongue that you know,

As the angel spake unto Mary, so many long years
ago ;

And she told me my love had reached her, and kept
her by my side,
Though the years had been so many, and the grave
had seemed so wide.

Don't fret, May, my best daughter, so tender, so
strong, so true;
Oh! May, my darling, my darling, I've always thanked
God for you:
You have been my best help always, so thorough in all
you do;
But for me the gates are opening, and I shall soon
pass through.

"A stroke!" was it, dear?—don't cry; it's the touch
of my Father's hand,
The voice of my Father calling me home to the better
land.
But two of us will be near you, your sister Joan and
me;
Is it growing darker, May, dear? Stop the loom, for
I cannot see!

WHAT WE OWE THEM

“**T**HERE are far too many children
In our alleys dark and dim ;
Why does God let them be born there,
If the children come from Him ?

Oh ! the longing for one darling
Unto gentle souls denied ;
Oh ! the sorrow past expressing
When a little one has died !

Here they cluster, sick, unsightly ;
Starving, live on scarce a crust ;
Born into a world o’erflowing ;
Herd like beasts, because they must.”

* * * * *

Once I had a vision stately
Of the city grand and vast,
Princely palace, proud cathedral,
And the river flowing past.

Bearing on its turbid waters
England’s commerce far and wide,
Life-pulse of a mighty nation,
Mainspring of its wealth and pride ;

And the sun's departing splendour
Flooded all with crimson glow,
Bathed the houses, kissed the steeples,
Rippled on the tide below.

"This a glory for the painter ;
This for poet's pen," I cried ;
Stopped as quickly ; for beside me
Something slowly stirred and sighed.

Just a little ragged urchin,
Just an outcast of the street,
With a baby huddled closely
On the pavement at my feet.

Vanished all the golden glory ;
Fogs and mists began to rise ;
Closed around those city children
With the hunger in their eyes.

Doubts and questions stormed within me ;
"Providence at fault? nay, I ;
Dare I doubt eternal goodness,
Though His children droop and die?"

Then the mists were slowly parted,
Each with silver radiance lit ;
Once again I saw the city,
And God's angels guarding it.

Hush'd the tumult, hushed the bustle,
As they holy vigil kept ;
Softly pillowed on their bosoms
Weary little children slept.

All the waifs and strays of London
Gathered in their close embrace,
Girt about with love of heaven
Beaming on each pale, wan face.

As I wondered, lo ! an angel
Came and took me by the hand ;
Led me through the sleeping city :
“ You must learn and understand

Why the children throng in byways,
Why so many lives are given,
Given only to be gathered,
Buds on earth for bloom in heaven.”

Into many lordly dwellings,
Truth, the clear-eyed angel, came,
Flashed his light upon their inmates,
Turned their beauty into shame.

Tore the veil from splendid seeming,
Shewed the evils hiding there ;
Lives debased by Mammon worship
Folly's triumph, love's despair.

Marriages *not* made in heaven ;
Pure religion but a name ;
Love to man a fitful flicker ;
Selfishness a full-fed flame.

Said the angel, " These, the worldly,
Unto whom so much is given ;
By their wickedness and folly
Close the avenues of heaven.

They would stop the holy influx ;
Laugh the God of love to scorn ;
But to keep the channel open
All these little ones are born.

Thus the heavenly life descendeth
Into infant innocence ;
Thus their angels, God beholding,
Spread its hallowed influence.

When you see the beggar children
Coming, going, to and fro,
See their little wistful faces,
Think of what to them you owe."

Truth, the angel, swift ascending ;
Rosy morning filled the sky,
Breathing of a purer future
When the children need not die.

DICK

“THE pit’s afire!” To depths below,
In the rude cage the brave men go;
Watched by strained eyes of tearless woe.

“All back?” “Not all; Dick, who was wed
This morn, is missing; must be dead;
He was the foremost”—so they said.

Then three score years went slowly round,
And working further underground,
A lad, with lips of rose, they found.

His face, that smiled in death, none knew;
They brought an old, old lass to view;
“O Dick! my Dick; so brave and true!”

Youth in its bloom; age, worn and grey.
In one deep grave were laid away:
In Heaven there dawned a marriage day.

MELISSO'S QUEST

FROM THE DECAMERON

ROBED for judgment on his throne
Sat the wise King, Solomon.

There before him come and go
All who highest truth would know.

Fragrant Ind and far Cathay,
East and west met every day

At his footstool; to enquire
How to compass their desire.

There, Melisso journeying,
Came, a suppliant to the King.

“Solomon! attend my cry!
Young and rich, well-born am I;—

I, my goods in plenteous store
Share with all who pass my door.

Nor on rich men do I wait;
Poor, are welcomed at my gate.

Still they come, and still they go ;
Rich and poor, and high and low ;

While my bounties have no end ;
Yet I nowhere find a friend."

Answered Solomon, the King,
Young Melisso's questioning.

"Would'st thou truly, wisely, give ;
LEARN TO LOVE, by love to live ;

Thou hast given of thy store,
Give no less, but love men more ;

Wealth is this world's better part,
Love is riches of the heart ;

If thou lovest all the rest,
Love endureth, love is best."

All men heard admiring
Solomon's wise answering.

Young Melisso went his way,
Stronger, humbler, from that day ;

Strove thereafter to life's end,
Not to *make*, but *be* a friend.

IN PRAISE

ODE FOR THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE

O THOU Eternal Lord
Who rulest o'er the kingdoms of the earth,
We thank Thee that our English Rose had birth;
That Thou on her bestowed
Life's fragrance and life's beauty!
Gave to her hands to hold
Great England's sceptre and Thy sovereign Word,
Earth's highest, Heaven's supreme!
No fair, fantastic dream
Before her gaze unrolled
But noblest use revealed as crownèd duty.

We praise Thee, Thee alone!
We thank Thee that her life has flowed
From home's heart-centre pure
Through regal splendours that endure
The fleeting radiance of the throne.

We thank Thee that her state has been
Full-summed as woman; bound
By dear familiar ties

Of wife and mother, as full-orbed and crowned
She stands before the nations, Empress-Queen,
And governs myriad destinies.

We thank Thee, Lord! Thy mighty power extends
Our land to bless;
Grant that her rule to earth's remotest ends
May work Thy righteousness;
Thy power proclaim,
And spread the knowledge of Thy living Word.
Till all the nations own Thy sway,
Thy sovereign love declare, Thy perfect law obey
And hail Thee! God and Lord!

VICTORIA

I

GONE!

Our beloved !

Our Lady, our Queen !

Never was known, never was seen,

Woman so revered, Queen so adored !

II

Through her vast empire

Her myriad children

Speak her name softly in accents of sorrow ;

Question, despondingly, "What of to-morrow ?"

III

What was the charm of her ?

Magical womanhood ?

Tenderest ties of the wife and the mother ?

Others have borne them loyally, royally.

Was it the majesty daily enfolding her,

Empress and Queen of a world-wide dominion ?

Others have worn it with wisdom befitting.

Was it the Faith of her Fathers ! that holding,
Held up the faith of her people, unfolding
A new Faith in duty ?
Faith broader and deeper,
Faith living and loving,
The Faith of the Master.

IV

Nay, 'twas her love for her people that drew them,
Circling a centre so true and so tender,
Simple and womanly.
All her swift heart-throbs
Pulsing to them with the instinct of motherhood ;
Winning from them the love and devotion
Of answering loyalty, deep and unswerving.

V

All that is mortal,
Lay, as she wished it,
Casket by casket, now wedded for ever,
Telling of Death the divider, of Love the eternal ;
Sign of consummate and perfect re-union.
Earth has that right to her,
Crown of her daughters.

VI

Fling wide the portals,
The spirit-world closing !

There may thought venture in reverent vision.
The good Queen has left us, disconsolate, mourning;
There is the joy and the rapture of greeting.
Through the wide courts of the world of immortals,
Thousands arriving, have brought the glad tidings,

“The great Queen is coming!
The loved Queen of England!
Of England the Free!

Mother of nations as yet in their childhood!”

Queen! she lay dying,
Queen! 'mid the living
Wakens again!

Gone! all the sorrow,
The pain of her widowhood;

Gone! in the glory of new life about her;
Life from within enfolding, caressing her;

Bathed in full sunshine,
God's Providence over her!
He gave and He takes her.

In His hand lie nations,
They and the rulers He gives for their guidance.

VII

Has she no message,
No word for her people?

Ah! it is this!

“England!

My country, my people,
I love thee
Now, as before.
Dear country, great and free,
Be great as of yore !
Lo ! it is God's command,
He who loves not his land
Enters not heaven !”

EXHIBITION ODE

CHICAGO, 1893

HAIL! stalwart land!
When great Columbus first beheld thy
 beauteous shore,
Its long low line with silver surf upbreaking;
 His vision fond of yore
Proven at last no dream, but true awaking;
 On bended knee,
Pale hands outstretched towards thee;
 With forehead prone,
He blessed the mighty Hand
Leading o'er sea wastes lone,
And bade his comrades, God, the Lord adore!

II

Afric's an infant, feeling in the dark!
 Thou!
A young giant, eager for the fray;
 Fresh fillets on thy brow,
Loins girt the old Olympian way

The elder world to race.
And sprung from its embrace
Proud Europe sets on thee its parent mark
Strong-thewed with wrestlings of its strenuous day.

III

Asia with solemn eyes,
Feet cradled in the snows of Ararat
Limbs swathed in ancient mysteries,
And mighty brows,
Wise with the far-famed wisdom of the East,
That all the world doth gape and wonder at ;
Sees this thy Western bravery
No envy in its breast,
But yearneth ever for a new sun-rise,
A universal harmony
When Peace shall reign, all strife at rest.

IV

Thy mother England cheers thee on,
Her first-born son !
With kindling love and admiration in her eyes,
Rejoicing in thy manhood's might.
She bears aloft the Light
Held through the stress of centuries,
The Light that lights the world and makes men
wise.

v

Bring the treasures of the lands,
Labour of many hands ;
The best that heart and brain
Can here attain ;
The lowly and the common-place,
With perfect form, and soul of grace.
The plough ; the iron horse ;
Earth's daily needs ; its new-found force
That girdles all the nations with a zone ;
The pen, the brush, the lyre ;
The New World's zeal, the Old World's fire ;
Strike the swift ear, the heart inspire,
On canvas live, or breathe in stone.

vi

Nor what is done alone !
The great To Be is sown
When men with men conspire !
Let East and West join hands,
Fulfilling just demands ;
Let North and South unite
In one aim,
For the Right !
Not only to proclaim
All world-wide wrong, all hidden shame ;
But each as unit here,
With lowly fear

And earnest prayer,
Resolve to do and dare
With utmost might ;
Till in the press of men,
No hunger-haunted den
Uprear its ghastly inmates to the sight ;
No city's nightly crowd
With deadly vice enshroud ;
But each man strive to reign
O'er household foes,
Chief source of woes,
King in his own domain !
And then,
Free nation of free men,
Be one vast voice
And in the Lord your God rejoice !

BALLAD OF OSENEY ABBEY

Oseney Abbey, near Oxford, was founded by Edith, wife of Sir Robert D'Oyly, in the reign of Henry I. The chattering of the magpies in a certain tree was the main cause of its building and endowment as the ballad relates.

FAIR Edith D'Oyly sits in her bower ;
Hark ! the birds are singing among the reeds ;
Bird-carols float over the reeds in flower ;
" God useth each for the other's needs."

There with her maidens of high degree ;
Hark ! the birds are singing among the reeds ;
Deftly she broiders rich tapestry ;
" God useth each for the other's needs."

Sir Robert D'Oyly, her husband hight,
Hark ! falcon bells and the hounds' deep bay ;
Lord of Oxford and Oseney, ease-loving knight ;
" To-morrow is nought, give us joy to-day."

Lush and green are sweet Oseney meads ;
Hark ! low of cattle and bleating of sheep ;
Bloom-bordered the river flows on through the reeds
" God giveth not riches for sloth and sleep."

By silvery Isis the ladies walk ;

Hark ! the magpies chatter among the trees :

Fair Edith cries ; " How the magpies talk ! "

" God sendeth no blessing on selfish ease."

" Frideswide's Canon's a holy man ; "

Hark ! matin chaunting and vesper bell :

" Fetch Father Ralph ! " swift the young page ran ;

" God loveth all, let us love Him well."

" I prithee, good Father, tell what the birds say ;

Hark ! the magpies are calling among the trees ;

They chatter to me as I pass by this way ; "

" God made you not for yourself to please."

" Not birds," saith the Canon, " but souls are these ;

Hark ! shadowless spirits inhabit the air ;

They passed their time in unthrifty ease ; "

" Live well your life and for death prepare."

" Come, build you an abbey to God alone ;

Hark ! lowly prayer and the hymn of praise ;

So let your good work for their loss atone ; "

" God giveth you strength to prolong your days."

Oseney Abbey is rich and rare ;

Hark ! the birds are singing among the reeds ;

Lo ! it is builded by Edith the fair ;

" God useth each for the other's needs."

Altars and shrines there are twenty-seven ;

Hark ! angels are striking their harps of gold ;

Each is a gate that leadeth to heaven,

“ When duty is done, lo ! the gates unfold.”

LIFE OUT OF DEATH

INDIAN LEGEND OF THE ARBUTUS

IN the dead of the year !
'Neath a sheet of snow,
Ice-gripped below,
Dark rivers flow.

In the deep of the night !
O'er the arch immense,
Blackness intense,
Star refulgence.

In the heart of the woods !
Throbs a pent-up sigh,
Nature is nigh
Death-agony.

“ I am Manito !
Old and wayworn am I ;
Snow-white my hair and beard ;
Here by the forest weird
Is the lodge of Manito,

Slave of Mannaboosha,
Maker of all things."

Spirits of evil
Wail through the woods at night;
Keen piercing frost-bite
Slays the wild beast and bird,
All else is still.
Still is the forest-lodge,
Smoulders the hearth-fire;
O'er the snow-reaches,
Seeking for fuel,
Wanders Manito,
Seeking, but finds not.

Spent all his energy,
Weary returning
Back to his wigwam,
Back to the embers
Nought can rekindle.
Prone on the ground he lies,
Wrapped in his mantle,
Pale hands outstretching
Through the thick darkness;
"Great Mannaboosha,
Save me, thy servant,
I, thy Manito,
Perish and die!"

Parting the curtain,
Curtain of deer-skin,
Lo ! in the door-way,
Lighted by star-shine,
Stands a bright maiden.
Raven, her glossy hair
Floats all about her,
Flows to the small feet
Lily-bell moccasin'd.
Cheek of the wild rose ;
Eyes, soft and lustrous,
Glow in the starlight,
Fawn-like and tender.
Grey-golden willow-buds
Slip from her fingers ;
Larch-tassels drooping
Fringe from her shoulders ;
Ferns and frail grasses
Woven enfold her.
Wreathed with sweet blossoms,
Delight of the meadows,
Starring her garments,
Crowning her beauty ;
“ Rouse thee ! Manito !
Behold the bright vision ! ”

Grey in the shadow
Stands forth Manito ;

“ Daughter, I greet thee ;
Shelter within here ;
Poor is my wigwam,
Cheerless ; but less so
Than the wild tempest
Raging without there.
Here will I give thee
Peace-pipe of welcome.
Enter, and tell me
Cause of thy coming,
Clad in such garments
Not meet for wandering.
Tell me thy country,
All thy great doings ;
I will make answer,
I am Manito,
Hear, too, my exploits ! ”

Slowly the maiden
Entered, and sat there,
Breath of her beauty
Filling the wigwam ;
Took the long peace-pipe,
Smiled on Manito.

Spake then the old man,
Eyeing the smoke rings :
“ I am Manito !

When with strong breath I blow,
Rivers are silent,
Streams cease to flow ! ”

Smiling, the maiden
Made him her answer :
“ Where’er my footsteps go,
Blossoms spring up and grow,
Earth is flower-laden.”

“ I am Manito !
I shake my locks, and snow
Covers the earth below ;
Trees in the forest there
Droop with white burdens low ! ”

“ Soft scudding silver showers
Fall from my golden bowers,
Bowers fragrance-laden ;
When with fantastic whirl,
Close braid or loosened curl,
My raven hair I twirl ; ”
Laughed out the maiden.

“ Leaves in the dark wood drear
Shudder and crackle,
Fall to earth, brown and sere ;

Birds wing their swiftest flight,
Even their pinions light
Terrors enshackle ;
Beasts hide themselves in fear,
Scenting my presence near ;
I am Manito ! ”

“ All things before me
Welcome my coming ;
Blue skies bend o’er me,
Breezy and humming ;
Insect life stirring,
Gauzy wings whirring,
Birds’ joyous trilling,
Liquid notes spilling
Prodigal melodies everywhere.
There in the morning gleam
Whispers the loosened stream ;
After the winter’s pain
Dumb things revive again.
Green grow the coverts near,
Brown buds on boughs appear,
Leaves soon to follow ;
Flowers lift their golden eyes
Brimming with wonder,
Bathed in the richest dyes
Over and under,
Gemming with loveliness

Hillside and hollow.
Life's on the meadows now,
Life on the mountains' brow,
Life in the air ! ”

Thus to Manito
Sang the bright maiden,
Filling the wigwam
With fragrance and beauty ;
Drowsy the old man grew,
Balmily breathed on
Dropt into slumber.
Arrowy sunbeams
Scattered the darkness ;
“ Say-ee,” the blue-bird
Brave-breasted blue-bird,
Piped in the door-way ;
“ Drink me,” the river
Cried from the sedges.
Over Manito
Bent the fair maiden ;
Passed her hands over him,
Once, twice, thrice, quickly.
Smaller and smaller
Grew his worn body,
Fainted his spirit
Breathing her beauty.
Forth from his nostrils,

From his lips streaming,
Crystal clear waters
Danced in the sunlight,
Bounded o'er mosses
On to the river.

Nought of Manito,
Nought of his wigwam,
Was there remaining ;
Buried in greenness
Of leaf and of grasses.
Then the sweet maiden
Took from her bosom
Peerless white blossoms,
Hid them in silence
'Neath the fresh leaf-shroud
Of vanished Manito.
"All who would pluck thee,
Cull thy rare fragrance,
Do so on bended knee
In this remembrance,
All of my virtues,
All of my sweetest breath
Grew in thy shelter,
Life out of death."

Passed the rare maiden
Through woods, over plains,

Birds' carols greeting her,
Beasts with their young ones
Sporting around her ;
Where her light footfall
Touches the meadows,
There and not elsewhere
Grows the arbutus.

ONE OF HIS CHILDREN

“**G**REEN fields in Heaven!” Yes, that will be good,

I went there once just before Polly died.—

Polly’s my sister, she was lame like me,

But born so, never ran about at all ;

Though once she tried to, tried to run away

For mother beat her cruel. ’Twas the drink

As did it, drink and want of food and work.

Can one get work in Heaven if one tries?—

I like your Heaven, it is very good.

I thought that Heaven was always singing Psalms,

And I’d not know them, have to stand outside,

Like once I did at church-time. Heard the hymns

And all the people singing beautiful

Until a Bobby came and moved me on.—

No Bobbies there? Ah! well, they’re often kind,

But rough-like, it’s their way.—When Polly died

I used to wonder where she went, and if

She’d learnt the singing and would teach it me.

We thought the sky was Heaven, she and I,

And used to sit and watch it: it was all

She had to look at, though I sometimes found

A broken toy or picture in the street,
And took it home to please her. She would smile,
And then we played together, each told tales,
And fancied there was some one cared for us,
Too far away to help us, in the sky.
'The Lord,' you say, 'has always cared for us.'
Well, Polly always said that some one did,
And that he lived above there in the sky ;
And so we loved it, watched the stars at night,
And saw the white clouds race along the blue
Like busses in the street.

But when she died

I could not bide the garret, ran away,
And lived as best I could, and tried to get
A penny here and there. 'Twas very hard.
Does the Lord know how very hard it is ?
You say He does, perhaps He'll help the rest,
For lots of boys are like me in the streets,
And lots of girls too, which is often worse.
They should not be there, for they are not strong ;
I think that Polly made me kind to girls.—
Polly's not lame now ? You're sure of that ?
Can walk about, and run ; and play, and laugh ;
Be glad and happy ?—The Lord took her then
And put her in a garden ?—Once she said
She'd like to sell the flowers in the streets ;
Now, she may see and smell them all the day.

She did so love a flower. That is good!
And you say folks will treat her kindly there,
Angels you call them,—Will she be one too?
And will she know me? Oh! I could not bear
For Polly not to know me.

Shall I see
The good Lord that you tell of? Will He speak
Kindly, like you, to a poor boy like me?
He'll call me "Johnnie!" Does he know my name?
Then Polly told Him as she said she would.
I'm very glad that Polly sees Him there,
He's safe to love her, p'raps He'll love me too.
The Doctor says I very soon must die,
And you say that He'll take me when I do.
Good-bye, and thank'ee, sir."

A few days more
And Johnnie *lived* within His Father's house.

WAYSIDE WORDS

“ ‘**T**HERE you will see again !’
My heart leaped high ;
As the bright words and brighter vision passed,
Veiled in the cloud that shrouded sightless eyes
And left me passive, but unreconciled.

“ Ah ! how the thought has haunted ; time and time
Re-iterant ; a hope that yet would rise
However fronted by ‘ It cannot be.
No one has e’er come back to tell us so ;
’Tis but a fancy such as women dream,
Unproven, unrecorded and unknown.’

“ Dying ! The grave awaits me ; nought beyond.
Tortured with pain ; unrestful ; I must die.
Pass like a leaf, that storm-wind blown, is tossed
Into a corner, fugitive, to rot.

“ Yes ! I have done my work, my manhood’s best ;
That is the sum complete of human worth ;
Sole residue, sole heritage, the least,
The greatest, so the race be perfected.

“God! how the anguish tears me! Let me die!
Quick! lift me up! I go to prove those words!”

But they, who watching, saw the stricken face
Lit with a sudden rapture, e'er the end
Locked it in silence; felt he proved them true.

VICTORIA REGINA, DEI GRATIÂ

THRONED in the nation's heart: her people's
prayers

Gird her about, as round her isle the sea
Brings ceaseless tribute of recurring wave,
Fed from the distant poles. So vast her realm,
No golden sunrise into sunset flares,
But sees her sceptred power and empery.
Crowned wife and mother. Womanhood most brave,
Breasting the storms that threaten to o'erwhelm,
With steadfast courage and a faith serene:
By grace of God! Victoria, the Queen!

BABE-LORE

WHY does baby lie and stare,
Smiling at the empty air?
Tiny hands held out to take
Nothing, for its own sweet sake?
Why does it make such ado
With its musical soft "coo"?
Does the far-light in its eyes
Reach away to Paradise?

Mother-musings, babe on knee,
With "their angels" sure must be,
Mindful of their presence near,
Conscious of their heavenly sphere.
Mother-love, most sacred dower,
Feel the sweet angelic power,
Holy, innocent, and wise,
Flowing down from Paradise.

Why do children at their play
Make their playthings *live* away,
Share their sorrows, feel their joys?
Pretty, ugly, broken toys,—

All in childhood's fancy live,
Questions answer, kisses give ;
Sun and moon and stars and skies
Live in children's Paradise.

Why do lonely ones in sport
Have some playmates in their thought,
And, shut out from interchange,
Fill the blank with fancy's range ;
Brothers, sisters, make-believe,
Quaintest speech for them conceive ;
Baby-babblings, scarcely wise,
Sure unheard in Paradise ?

Upward, for the cause we seek ;
Wondrous truths, forever speak
Of our heavenly Father's love,
Manifest in heaven above,
Where each radiant atmosphere
Quick with beauty doth appear ;
Living blossoms fill the skies
For the babes in Paradise.

Roses, lilies, daisies fair,
Petall'd-soft as babies' hair,
Make a cloudland, lustrous, rare—
Bathed in perfume, scent the air.

All the flowers that grow on earth,
Have above their primal birth ;
There no blossom ever dies—
Life is Lord of Paradise.

Loveliest clouds flush rosy light ;
See the children's rapt delight !
In the clouds fair forms appear ;
Living children hover near ;
Who can picture forth the glee
Of such camaraderie ?
Baby-laughters, low love-cries,
Music make in Paradise.

Quick they grow and swift they learn,
Living truths around discern ;
Books they need not, pictures glow
With the lore they love to know ;
Object lessons thus are given
To the little ones in heaven ;
Virgin angels, loving-wise,
Teach the babes in Paradise.

On the earth some flashes stay—
Remnants of its golden day—
When the children in their play
Felt the angel's gentle sway,

When true manhood mankind bore,
Womanhood all women wore,
And in children's earthly eyes
Lived the light of Paradise.

May such influence not come
Downwards from their heavenly home?
Tiny fingers, clutching air,
Touch babe-angels elsewhere?
Children babbling at their play,
Have companions? Who can say?
Childhood's soul-life still arise,
Share the joy of Paradise?

HIS! AND MINE

I HAVE a body, fitly, wisely made,
Each separate member in full use array'd;
A free bond-servant labouring for no hire,
Slave of my will, obeying my desire :
But Time will come, its moments swiftly fly
This faithful servant will decay and die ;
And yet I know,
Though this be so,
“ God’s Providence is my inheritance.”

I have a soul throned in my inmost brain,
Alive to joy, and sensitive to pain ;
Throughout my body is its wide domain,
And far as finger-tips extend, its reign :
But dread unreason might usurp that throne,
For reason is the gift of God alone ;
This might be so,
Yet still I know,
“ God’s Providence is my inheritance.”

I have some friends, some goods, some gifts of mind,
But kindest friends may sometimes prove unkind ;

Or dying, leave barefilled their wonted place,
With mem'ry only of each well-loved face,
My goods may perish, vanish all my store,
And I be left alone, worn-out and poor ;

Did these all go,

Yet still I know,

“God’s Providence is my inheritance.”

I am myself,—beset by selfish fears,
Self interests clamouring at list’ning ears ;
Self pleasures sought, self projects plann’d,
Body and soul tied down to self’s demand ;
Thus should I grovel, did not Light Divine
Reveal the darkness that I know is mine.

Ev’n how this fares,

The Father cares ;

“God’s Providence is my inheritance.”

Mine are the fears, the doubts, the morrow’s care,
The varied evils that my soul ensnare ;
All else but these alone as gifts I claim,
Those outbirths of His glory ; *these* my shame :
Without His truth how naked should I be ;
Without His love, how great my poverty !

When those I own

As His alone,

“God’s Providence is my inheritance.”

Heir of the sunshine and health-giving breeze
Of life, full sown with possibilities ;
Heir of short time, of all eternity,
Heaven's joy or hell's despair free choice for me ;
Heir of creative, all-sustaining love,
Whether I sink beneath or rise above ;
 Or low, or high,
 His care am I ;
 “ God's Providence is my inheritance.”

HOLINESS

A LITTLE child
That knoweth nought although the world be
fair,
Though love and life are round it everywhere,
Yet knowing nought, unknowing, hath no care ;
Each tender, slowly waking sense,
Infilled with helpless innocence ;
The Lord doth bless
With holiness.

A Newton wise,
Who on the shores of science stooping low,
Takes thence a pebble tossed by ocean's flow ;
And reverent cries, " Knowing so much, I know
My knowledge finite as the sea
Of Time to vast Eternity ; "—
The Lord will bless
With holiness.

A seraph strong
Enfolded in the glow of Love Divine,
Bathed through and through with light from
Wisdom's shrine ;

Star-radiant, sun-refulgent, sings : “ Not mine
Are thought, word, deed ;—Thy mercy, Lord,
Holds me from sin ; Thy Name adored
Hath power to bless
With holiness ! ”

DO WE GET OUR DESERTS ?

IT is not what we have, but what we are,
That we bear with us here or elsewhere.
Not for his sores was Lazarus upraised,
But for his patient waiting at the gate,
Contented with the crumbs that, heedless, fell.
Nor for his riches Dives stood condemned,
But for unlifted eyes at other's woes.—
A little child, by poverty engirt,
Will hold an orange for a golden world,
Absorbing all its sweetness with a smile ;
While crowned Alexander, abject, weeps,
There are no more to conquer. Poor, indeed !

SPRING SONG

LAUGH, primrose stars ! in the coppice and wood,
Laugh in the sunshine and smile in the showers;
God, the Creator, when naming it " good "
Clad the brave earth in a garment of flowers.

Bloom, black-thorn bush ! dainty bride of the Spring,
Bloom in the beauty of shimmering veil ;
For thy espousals as bridemaids bring
Celandine, violet, wind-flower pale.

Leap, woolly lambs ! through the varying day,
Mother-love watches you, calls to its side ;
Over the meadows, dance, frolic and play,
Earth is renewed in the joyous Spring-tide.

Brood, happy birds ! o'er each deftly made nest,
Twitter and carol your burden of love ;
Sing to the wide world, home life is the best ;
Image of Heaven, let down from above.

Rise, holy lark ! from the dawn-bedewed grass,
Hymn thy Creator afar in the blue ;
Over and round thee, the storm clouds may pass
Sing thou Love's glory that pierces them through.

FLOWERS

I N heaven the angels' cup
Is full of joy, I wis ;
And oft it bubbles up
With overflowing bliss.

Then o'er the golden rim
It falls in fragrant showers,
And on earth's bosom dim
Descends, a rain of flowers.

OCEAN VOICES

BY the sea in stormy weather
Watch the wild waves whitely feather,
Roll, and roar, and break together
On the level sandy shore.

Overhead the low clouds fly,
Like wan ghosts, across the sky,
Underhung most sullenly,
With a leaden canopy
Drooping ever more and more.

Westward ho! a sudden light,
Day's last benison to night,
Gleams and flashes, wildly bright,
Mirrored on the glassy sand;
Ruddy flush of parting day
Loath to yield imperial sway
To the monarch who alway
Followeth in mantle grey
His quick march from land to land.

Through the scud come steely flashes,
Eyes keen glance 'neath drooping lashes,

Shining where the water dashes
Foam-fret laces at our feet.
Far away the lighthouse gleam
With its clear methodic beam
Through the night—Divinest theme—
Tells of love and care supreme,
Breathes a confidence complete.

Watch the tide for ever flowing,
Rest or stillness all unknowing,
Taking from, and yet bestowing
With a free and open hand ;
Hymning praise or chanting dirges,
Thundering in mighty surges,
Wave from wave breaks, and emerges ;
Onward though its impulse urges,
Bound by Law's august command.

Dark grey cliffs that gird the shore,
Rising from the sandy floor
Sea-cleansed daily, foam-washed o'er
By the health-begetting waves.
Rugged cliffs, austere and grand,
Hoary-headed, guard the strand,
Sentinel the sleeping land
Stretching far on either hand
Where the angry ocean raves.

Whisper'd to thy soul alone
Ocean's organ monotone ;
Sough of wind, or tempest's moan
 'Neath the dark and troubled skies ?
" Ocean-voices, sonorous, grave ;
Sang a high triumphant stave ;
Sang of Him who came to save ;
Sang of Him who trod the wave ;
 Sang His Providence, all wise ! "

THE LAST GLEAM

SHINE out, O sun, and kiss the dying year
Full tenderly ; he may not linger here.
His garments rent,
His strength all spent,
The quiet night will stretch him on his bier.

All-nakedly he sinks, as he all-naked rose ;
Attendant mercies and attendant woes
About his feet
Do reverence meet ;
Into the dark of time alone he goes.

So pass the years, so fade the centuries ;
Man, born of God, has vaster destinies.
Nought can control
His buoyant soul ;
Death calls, time slips, he gasps eternities.

GOLDEN LIVES

THE woods drop gold ; the air is filled
With red-breast flutings sweet and clear ;
Most constant minstrel of the year,
He sings when other songs are stilled.

The woods drop gold ; a shimmering sea
Of woven glory floods the ways ;
Serenest blue above, a haze
Of chastened sadness folds the lea.

The woods drop gold ; so golden lives
Of tender loving pass away ;
Far in the blue of perfect day
The beauty of their song survives.

RAIN

RAIN, softly fall !
Fall on the tender grass,
And make earth's face
A dream of grace.

Rain, softly fall !
Do not the flowerets pass ;
Draw sweet perfume
From every bloom.

Rain, softly fall !
The forests call to thee,
To cool the brows
Of waving boughs.

Rain, softly fall !
Grey mountain and deep sea,
Rest and unrest
By thee are blest.

Rain, softly fall !
Tears of the babes at play,
An April rain
That smiles again.

Rain, softly fall !

Veiling o'er youth's bright day
A rainbow mist
By sunbeams kissed.

Rain, softly fall !

Strong manhood needs thy balm,
Sad, tired lives
Thy touch revives.

Rain, softly fall !

Old age desires thy calm ;
Above thy tears
God's love appears.

RAIN-VISIONS

REST here, nor heed the rain-fringed cloud,
But watch afar the sun's descent ;
Close-gathering mists our path enshroud
Of grey and silver softly blent.

The passing monarch's regal power
With sudden splendour smites the hills ;
And Danae's swift golden shower
The far-off sleeping valley fills.

With radiance flooded, earth and sky
Are mingled, wrapped in close embrace ;
Fair golden vistas open lie
That quivering sunbeams interlace.

There dwells the glory ! Overhead
The scudding clouds are drooping low :
Now turn ; on purple moors outspread
God writes His promise of the bow.

SWALLOWS

A WET SUMMER

“O SWALLOWS, summer swallows, swiftly
 circling to and fro,
 How is it that ye linger when the chilly
 breezes blow,
And the rain for ever falling, seems to bid you south-
 ward go?”

“O swallows, faithful pilgrims to our grey, low-
 drooping skies,
When summer days are heavy with the tear-drops in
 their eyes,
Do ye sigh for sunny Afric's red and golden
 memories?”

“Across the hurtling waters with unwearied wings we
 come,
A heaven-born instinct guides us o'er the wide sea's
 toss and foam,
And the lode-star that attracts us is old England's
 watchword ‘Home!’”

“We love her grassy meadows and we love her
whispering leaves;
For the simple sturdy yokels that bind her golden
sheaves
Welcome back the feathered rovers to their nests
'neath cottage eaves.”

Like thoughts that range earth's sciences of glory and
of might,
Rejoicing in her goodliness, her wonders their delight,
Are the free and happy swallows as they wing their
seaward flight.

But the swallows homeward winging when spring
calls o'er the sea,
Are like thoughts forever turning from Thy works, O
Lord, to Thee,
That through storm and cloud and sunshine, give
Thee love more full and free.

THE DEAD LEAVES FALL

THE dead leaves fall ; but Spring returns again
With verdant joyance, promise of the year ;
Though softly, like the dropping of the rain
In golden showers ; or drifting, brown and sere,
The dead leaves fall.

The dead leaves fall ; our dear ones pass away,
And Death's keen sickle robs us of their smile ;
Earth claims her own ; the soul's diviner ray
Is hidden from our vision for awhile,
When dead leaves fall.

The dead leaves fall ; our hopes caress the ground,
Though glad fulfilment crowns them if they rise ;
Transformed by God's long patience, they are found
In heaven's fair Spring-time ; under its clear skies,
No dead leaves fall.

FOREST LORE

THE trees are bare ;
Their characters unfold
As slip away
Their liveries of gold.

How brave they are !
How steadfastly withstand
Assault of winds,
Stern winter's cruel band !

Of song bereft,
They bend their boughs and sigh,
“ 'Tis not for long,
Spring cometh bye and bye.”

The snow wreaths fall,
And glorified, they sleep
The quiet night ;
At morn, awake and weep.

Are they content
To take what God doth send ?
Then so should we,
Dear heart, and wait His end.

INVOCATION

COME baby year and bring to me
The innocence of infancy ;
The happy dreams that used to lie
So far from earth, so near the sky :—
Come baby year !

Come striving year and bring to me
The daily labour steadfastly ;
The sowing time of hopes and fears,
The aftermath of joy and tears :—
Come striving year !

Come waning year and bring to me
Old age's calm philosophy ;
The trust that evermore can see
The dawn of immortality :—
Come waning year !

PRESENCE AND INSIGHT

O WORLD so near, that seems so far,
Where they who lived and loved us are,
Who live and love us yet;
Where free from earth's distress and pain,
Their souls stoop down to ours again,
Nor e'er old loves forget!

O souls serene, now passed away,
Rejoicing in an ampler day
Of freër use above!
Ye see life's mysteries unfold,
All-charactered in living gold
Of everlasting love.

MEMORIES

SOFT waves of music rose and fell
Within the house of prayer and praise ;
Obedient to the charmèd spell
Thronged memories of other days.

Dear faces, smiling through the gloom,
The gathered mists of passing years,
I see you touched with vernal bloom,
Your eyes undimmed by earthly tears !

Kind friends who loved me ; all the love
So freely given, frank and true,
Should surely draw my thoughts above
And link my soul with heaven and you !

MORS JANUA VITÆ

T. H.

GONE on before ! Old age's mantle slips
With earthly vesture : angels touch our lips,
And all is changed ; Death's seeming for Life's real.
Here marble stillness ; beauteous last appeal
For tender thought, for love's soft benison !
There circling warmth, divinely breathed upon
Thy vigorous manhood's early strength renewed,
Body and soul with freest powers endued,
Will find within the eternal world above
Delight in use ; in work, Life's crown of love !

PERFECT PEACE

THE MOTHER. AUGUST 6TH, 1894

I F love could keep you, dearest,
You would stay :
But greater love is calling—
Draws away.

Our feeble knowledge failed us,
Yet we know
That perfect wisdom holds you—
Better so.

Our weak hands vainly sought
To give you rest :
The hand Divine uplifts you—
That is best.

SONNETS

POETRY AND POETS

THE POET

THE Poet needs no laying on of hands
To mark his ordination. At his birth
Song-angels hover round him, and engirth
His soul with longings for Divine commands.
Let him but hearken, and full-voiced he stands
God's minister ! For all the listening earth
Is sensitive to song. Love, sorrow, mirth,
Touch'd by his genius, answer his demands.

King, priest, and prophet ! Monarch on his throne
Has no such empire ; and, for priesthood, he
Leads earth's full choirs to praise the Lord alone.
No fateful foregleams dull his prophecy,
For, seeing God o'er all things, he can own
A future broadening, perfected and free.

MY ENGLAND AND MY POETS

ST GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23RD, SHAKESPEARE BORN

MY ENGLAND and my poets! heritage
Of priceless freedom; of high strenuous
thought;

Freedom and poesy so close enwrought
That their twinned strength illumines every page.

God-guarded island! led from stage to stage;
When lettered Alfred with thy foemen fought;
Or when the Armada's boasting came to nought,
And Shakespeare crowned the Elizabethan age.

Dear native country! heart of the wide earth,
Thy vivid pulses throb from shore to shore,
Bearing the life of freedom, and the lore
That lighting life, uplifts it to true worth!
God grant that poet-souls in thee have birth
And lofty utterance for evermore.

ROBERT BURNS

PLOUGHMAN and poet ! Heaven's award of toil
And chiefest gift of song was thine to bear ;
Field-mouse and daisy, turned up by thy share,
Became immortal children of the soil ;
The lonely kirk, the witches' wild turmoil,
The gruesome sights that met Tam's awestruck
stare ;
His flight, distressful, on his faithful mare,
Till Doon's dark waters his pursuers foil.

Sweet Highland Mary and her troth-plight given,
That "lessening star " too early set in Heaven ;
The man's true value and strong brotherhood ;
The simple joys for which the poor give praise,—
All these found utterance in thy lays,
With love of nature and thy country's good.

ROBERT BROWNING

DECEMBER 12TH, 1889

O STRONG and true! that in a doubting age
Stood for the Christ, and owned Him God
supreme;

His manhood urged, for vague and empty dream
Of God impersonal;—flung down thy gage
Against the world's despair:—deep-sighted sage
Unveiling human hearts with master hand.

Dead: but a living voice throughout the land!
England laments thee, owns her heritage

Of glorious song yet more enriched by thee!—

Pass on great lover to thy "lyric love";

Her welcome greets thee and her smiles approve,
There to thy being's wide and utmost bound,

Strive for the noblest use thy soul doth see,
Vanished the "broken arc," attained the "perfect
round."

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

BORN, AUGUST 5TH, 1809.—DIED, OCTOBER 6TH, 1892.

L ORD of the golden lyre ! the silence falls
On hearts that love thee, knowing that to-day
Its strings are broken, and the hand away
Whose magic touch sad memory recalls.

Thou wert our sovran singer ! we, thy thralls,
Rejoiced to bow beneath so dear a sway :
Thy country's legends moved thy loftiest lay,
And gracious forms repeopled Arthur's halls.

Singer of love outliving loss and pain,
What weary souls hast thou not comforted
This side "the Bar," and past it, where again
Thy lovers greet thee, whence we hear it said,
"Welcome, thrice welcome !" in so glad a strain,
We know thou livest still, thou art not dead !

GREEK MYTHS

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

SIR F. LEIGHTON, *Pinxit*

I

Thear O and feel ; yet not to look nor speak !
Ye Gods relentless, see her clinging here ;
Heart beating on my heart devoid of fear,
Unwitting her caresses bid mine break !

Gods ! I am human ! Tempt not over much !
Her soft arm warmly winds about my neck,
Her head, the netted tresses so bedeck,
Droops on my breast : I feel her fingers touch ;

Feel ; and each quivering nerve throughout my frame
Thrills with the old strong rapture ; bursts to
flame ;—

“ Gods, ye have conquered ! thus I clasp her !
see !

Before ye all, my love, my wife, I claim !

Back, back dread shades, and leave my love to
me !—

Cold, bare, and empty ! Gone ! Eurydice ! ”

II

Immortal lovers ! parted at full tide
 Of wedded bliss. Death's gateways could not
 keep
 Ye sundered ; nor his brief and placid sleep
 True soul from answering soul for long divide.

Not in dim Hades, shadows do ye glide,
 Pale spectres of the love that was so deep ;
 Not Lethe waters do your memories steep,
 And bid ye mutely wander side by side.

But lo ! your waking eyes met love serene,
 The very wedded love ye held so fair :
 And as this world's so soon forgotten days,
 With joy ye learned the old Gods had not been ;
 And heard of One, the great All-Father there,
 From lips of friends grown musical with praise.

CLYTIE

THE SOUL'S ATTITUDE

I TURN to thee, O Lord of life and light ;
My waking thought, unerring, flies to Thee
As 'twere a skylark springing buoyantly
From lowly nest, as yet deep-drenched with night.

The live-long day is passed beneath Thy sight ;
Its abour looks t'wards Thee, although it lie
In little homely duties ; yet thereby
Comes work's fulfilment, quiet deep delight.

The twilight gathers ; the horizon's verge
Obscures and hides Thee, blots from sight awhile,
And slumb'rous wings enwrap me as a pall ;
I sleep, well knowing Thou wilt soon emerge
And rouse creation with Thy quickening smile,
Thou Source of Life and sovereign Lord of all !

GALATEA

I WHO am thine, who never was mine own,
I, Formed by thy thought, and moulded by thy will,
The counterpart thou choosest to fulfil
Thy destiny of being; wrought alone
By thee from senseless, soulless stone;
The fairest product of thy utmost skill.
Thou wearied'st heaven with sighs and prayers, until
The gods gave life, and I am woman grown.

Lo! thou dost deem me perfect; and I bring
The germs, inborn from thee, of every woe:
For the wise gods who heard thee clamour so,
Thy soul's desire once granted, could but know
Thy selfish quest would yield thee suffering;
Yet in my heart bade love for thee upspring.

NARCISSUS AND ECHO

“**M**OST beauteous self ! I fain would kiss thy lips,
Whose gracious curves so woo me from the
 deeps
 Of this calm water, where my image sleeps
Beneath the bank, that overhanging dips
As if to clasp it ; but my fancy grips
 And holds thee.—Near, persistent Echo peeps,
 And, barely noticed, ever closer creeps.
Fond maid ! whose passion from remembrance slips.”

He in himself, and she, absorbed in him ;—
 False love, faint life, waste use ;—unhappy pair !
Both pined and withered ; till the gateways dim
 Of Death received them. All his manhood lost,
He dwindled to a flow’ret nodding there ;
 And she a wandering voice, by vagrant breezes
 tossed.

AMPHION

AMPHION wrought a harp with wondrous skill,
And caught all Nature's music in its strings ;
The trees' low whisper, water murmurings,
And tuneful winds that wander as they will.

But in hushed night, his spirit, listening still,
Heard golden footfalls, rush of silver wings,
And knew great presences, learned holy things,
His harp with deeper music to infill.

So to Amphion's harping wise men drew,
With wondrous vision kindling in their eyes ;
Lo ! as he plays, fair cities meet their view,
And massive walls and stately towers arise.
Thus tuned to heaven's rich, vibrant harmonies,
In one clear night, Thebes' city, builded, grew.

NATURE

SPRING

NOW, when the wind-flower opens starry eyes,
And primroses shine out amid the green ;
Now, when the black-thorn's bridal veil is seen,
Come visions of the blooms of Paradise.
Now the glad lark from grass-hid nest espies
The East's first glory tinge the heavens serene,
Mounts one-warm-welcome from his home terrene,
Song's loved-connecting-link 'twixt earth and skies.

Ev'n so the soul, earth's flow'r-strewn fields among,
Green-nested lowlily 'mid homespun ways,
May be up-borne at will on pinions strong,
And breathe some foretaste of celestial airs,
May live a dual life of needful cares,
And heaven-bound aspirations hymning praise.

AUTUMN WHEAT-EARS

RIPE golden wheat-ears ! Consummated toil ;
The Spring's fair promise ; Summer's plenteous
dower

Of sunshine, centred in productive power ;
Autumn's victorious crown ; the whole year's spoil ;
The looked-for harvest, gathered from the soil,
Ripe, full, and golden ! Thus the man whose hour
Of time is past, returneth to the flower
Of perfect manhood in God's Harvest-coil.

Ripe with experience of life's duties done ;
Full of wise knowledge, thought-out and mature ;
Golden with love of neighbour and of God ;
True life immortal through life mortal won ;
High aims accomplished, and all hopes grown pure ;
Low-laid by Death ! LIFE lifts him from the
sod !

WINTER IVY

GREEN ivy, by the wayside trailing free
Thy garlands of fresh beauty, leaves most fine,
And dainty sprays that gracefully entwine
Thin, tapering fingers over hedge and tree !
In patient tenderness none equals thee
Among earth's garlands ; with a grace divine
Upon her ruins do thy dark leaves shine,
And linger o'er her gray stones lovingly.

Like woman's love, that in sweet homely ways,
With graceful touches beautifies the hour ;
But truer, deeper, stronger yet displays
When tempests threaten, and misfortunes lower ;
With gentle trust it faces adverse days,
More closely clings, unconscious of its power.

BEECH LEAVES IN WINTER

“**B**ROWN beech leaves, beauteous in decay,
Crisp, russet garments Winter overpast
In its undressing ; leaving you, the last
Of Autumn’s bravery, to deck its way.

Warm tones of colour in the smoky gray
Of wood and hedgerow ; or by roadside cast
’Mid ruddy brambles, sheltered from the blast,
Soft-outlined by the hoar-frost’s fairy spray.

Ye bid old age yield grace ; be warm and true ;
And shelter yet the younglings of the year
That dawned to-day so sadly ; cold and drear,
With rifts of wintry sunshine pallid-sweet ;—
What promises, brown leaves, are there for you ? ”—
“ To blend with earth ’neath tread of passing feet.”

SUNDAY MORNING

GRASMBERE

A SABBATH silence dwells among these hills,
An echo of the peace of paradise—
Silence that speaks to listening ears and eyes
In varied tones that only God infills.
Such holy music as the sky-lark thrills
When dawn's first glory bids him heavenward rise,
And greet the sun with rapturous ecstasies ;
Such ceaseless whisper of soft murmuring rills ;
One hymns Eternal Love, the Good Supreme,
Old, e'er the everlasting hills began ;
One daily duty, nourish'd at the spring
Of living waters: each unending theme.
Here every thought may take celestial wing,
Ascend to God, or droop to brother man.

A SEA-SABBATH

THE sea and sky one blue—a vaporous haze,
Born of the sunshine and the teeming tide,
Veils with mysterious beauty, as a bride
Half hides her charms from her true lover's gaze.

And on the quiet, waveless waterways,
The white-sailed boats, like living creatures glide ;
Snow-breasted gulls o'er gleaming ripples ride,
Or wheel their airy flight 'neath noon-tide's rays.

On the bold cliff, the wild thyme lures the bee,
And vagrant butterflies the blossoms sip,
The foam-edged waters curve with loving lip
About its base, low-murmuring the while ;
Save these, a solemn silence steeps the sea,
And Nature wears her calmest, holiest smile.

ON SEEING THE MOON AT MID-DAY

“**D**EAR Lady Moon, bereft by day of crown,
 Unsceptred in the glory of the sun ;
 Thy courtier-clouds, inconstant every one,
Melt in his smile and gloom beneath his frown.

Art thou content thy loveliness shall drown
 In his full splendour, so that thou hast won
 A place in the same heavens, radiantly o’errun
By his bright lances, spreading his renown ?”

“ I am content that He, my Lord, shall reign,
 And lose myself in glory of His light,
 From whom my own has being ; so I shine,
 Guiding earth’s way-worn children through the
 night ;
Faith’s reflex, that doth slowly wax and wane,
 Bathed in the sovereign smile of Love Divine.”

THE AIR IS FULL OF MUSIC

NO song for all this beauty? Fair unrolled
Lie hill and valley, cliff and sounding sea,
Brave moorland, pasture loved of honey-bee,
Its purple heather shot with bracken gold.

Here mossy cradles baby-rills enfold;
Here leaps the streamlet eager to be free;
Far down, the river laughs in sunlit glee,
Or glides through bosky shadows clear and cold.

The air is full of music. Wind-kissed leaf,
Wave-murmurs, and the fluting of a bird;
The pale corn whispers ere 'tis bound in sheaf;
All Nature's voices join in ceaseless song.
Blest Lord! though on my lips there lives no
word,
My heart is singing praises all day long.

SUNSET FROM LUSTLEIGH CLEAVE

HUSHED Nature watches as the sun withdraws
In flaming splendour down the glowing steep ;
Her throbbing pulses seem to gently pause,
With limbs outstretched, she folds her hands for sleep

Nought breaks the silence but a bird's faint cheep,
A moment's flutter in its leafy nest ;
Or plaintive bleat of silly, wandering sheep,
With night's first loneliness too much opprest.

Yet no ! throughout this sweetest reverie,
Amid the trees, far down the misty vale,
Where one might think the deepest calm would be,
The crystal river tells its ceaseless tale.

O Lord ! how deep so-e'er the silence be,
Some voice in Nature witnesseth of Thee !

AFTERGLOW

A THWART the sky an arch of gold
Lies flushed by day's departing glow,
And ocean's liquid depths enfold
Its mirror'd loveliness below.

Afar, the hills, in purple rest,
Lie folded 'neath the drooping skies ;
The rainbow-glory of the west
In gentle changes slowly dies.

O Lord of life ! from Thee we turn,
As turns the earth at eventide ;
For us Thy love and mercy yearn,
Howe'er we from Thy presence hide :

That love and mercy faintly show
In Nature's lingering Afterglow.

THE STARS

O'ERHEAD the stars burned through the blue,
Earth's radiant lamps in bright array;
Athwart the sky the Milky Way
Its myriad shining clusters drew.

And more and more the wonder grew,
As Nature's vision fell away,
And in the light of endless day
Each star a form of heaven, I knew.

For where a starry world appears
Hung in the spacious firmament,
It has a prototype Divine;
And angel hosts in holy spheres,
As morning stars refulgent shine
In living light, God-emanant.

GOD IMMANENT

SO busy this, our little world ;
Our souls, so prisoned in its ways,
That wingèd thoughts of prayer and praise
Lie sleeping in us, closely furled,
Save when by sudden anguish hurled,
White-lipped, we supplications raise ;
Or, on uplifted, golden days
We dream we see Heaven's gates empearled,
And sing for very joy of heart,
Abandoned to life's loveliness.—
O Father!, throned in might above,
Thee we forget, from Thee depart :
Our exaltations Thou dost bless,
Through all our sorrows throbs Thy love.

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG

Born January 29th, 1688

ROOM in the foremost rank for him, the sage,
Stupendous seer ! Herald of holiest light,
Whom long dark years have hid in noisome night
Of scorn and bigotry ! The sacred page,
Lapsed in men's minds to myth of by-gone age,
Has lost its message in their clouded sight,
Though, where its inner meaning lustres bright,
It saves the simple. Science, sceptics, wage
Fierce war with Revelation, and profane
The holy place. By falsehood once again
The Word is crucified ; its garments rent ;
Gross darkness clouds the heavenly firmament.
To meet the need, foreseeing all the pain,
His servant, Swedenborg, Jehovah sent.

READING THE WORD

WE read the Word, and lo ! the angels read
Companion-wise with us. We see unrolled
The highest law, the wonders manifold,
The perfect Life enwrought in word and deed.

For them, nor time nor space have any need,
Nor any things of earth. Their eyes behold
Its inner beauties characterized in gold,
Its Love and Wisdom answering every need.

Thou art the Word, O Lord ! in every part
The Law and Prophets testify of Thee ;
Creative and redeeming Love proclaim,
One God in one Divine Humanity ;
And highest angels glow at inmost heart
When little children syllable Thy Name.

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